

What is the National Register of Historic Places?

The National Register of Historic Places, established in 1966 and managed by the National Park Service, is the official list of structures, sites, objects, and districts that embody the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. The Register is our Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. More than 70,000 historic resources of all kinds (including 700,000 contributing buildings in historic districts) are listed. The National Register of Historic Places already includes more than 2,000 properties in Virginia. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources.

National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. These criteria recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the history and heritage of the United States and are designed to help state and local governments, Federal agencies, and others identify important historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation and of consideration in planning and development decisions.

Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the Nation, the State, or the community.
- Consideration in the planning for Federal or federally assisted projects.
- Eligibility for Federal tax benefits.
- Qualification for Federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

What are the Results of Listing Property on National Register?

Listing in the National Register honors a historic place by recognizing its importance to its community, State or the Nation. Under Federal law, owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose provided that there is no Federal involvement. Owners have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so.

- In addition to honorific recognition, listing in the National Register results in the following for historic properties: Consideration in planning for Federal, federally licensed, and federally assisted projects;

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on all projects affecting historic properties either listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register. The Advisory Council oversees and ensures the consideration of historic properties in the Federal planning process.

- Eligibility for certain tax provisions;

Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. This credit can be combined with a straight-line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 31.5 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of the tax credit claimed. Federal tax deductions are also available for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures; and

- Qualification for Federal grants for historic preservation, when funds are available.